

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

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PASS AGRICULTURE AND STR ELECTRONICALLY

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: EAGR, ETRD

SUBJ: STRAUSS-USHIBA FOLLOW-UP:BEEF AND CITRUS

1. THE TOKYO SHIMBUN, IN A PAGE-THREE REPORT, WITH THE CAPTIONS NOTING, "'NON-FULFILLMENT OF PROMISE' IS UN-REASONABLE; AGRICULTURE-FORESTRY-FISHERY MINISTRY REBUTS FRONTALLY; ON EXPANSION OF IMPORTS FROM US," REPORTED AS FOLLOWS:

- AGRICULTURE-FORESTRY-FISHERY ADMINISTRATIVE VICE MINISTER OKAWARA, AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE 13TH, SAID THAT "A US GOVERNMENT SOURCE'S CRITICIZING OUR COUNTRY'S NON-FULFILLMENT OF PROMISE SHOWS THE SOURCE'S LACK OF STUDY ON THE MATTERS OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE US, BASED ON THE USHIBA-STRAUSS TALKS IN JANUARY, AND THERE ARE NO GROUNDS FOR OUR COUNTRY TO BE CRITICIZED." THIS SOURCE THUS FRONTALLY REBUTTED THE STATEMENT MADE BY A US GOVERNMENT-CONNECTED PERSON, NOW VISITING JAPAN, ON THE 12TH, TO THE EFFECT THAT "THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT IS NOT CARRYING OUT ITS PROMISE TO EXPAND THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPORTS OF HIGH-GRADE BEEF BY 10,000 TONS AND TO TRIPLE THE FRAMEWORK FOR IMPORTS OF ORANGES."

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- THE VICE MINISTER SAID, FIRST OF ALL, IN REGARD TO THE PROBLEM OF BEEF, "THE JOINT STATEMENT'S SAYING THAT EFFORTS WILL BE MADE ON BOTH SIDES TO INCREASE THE IMPORTS OF BEEF BY 10,000 TONS IS A GENERAL REFERENCE TO THE LAST. THERE IS NO PROMISE THAT IMPORTS WILL BE MADE FROM THE US ALONE. IT SEEMS, HOWEVER, THAT THE US SIDE IS REGARDING THIS AS MEANING THAT IT WILL BE PURCHASED SOLELY FROM THE

US ALONE."

- ALSO, POINTING OUT THAT QUOTAS FOR BEEF IMPORTS ARE NORMALLY ALLOCATED IN MAY, FOR THE FIRST HALF OF THE FISCAL YEAR, SAID THAT THE US CRITICISM IS "NOT TO THE POINT," IN CONNECTION WITH THE BEEF IMPORTS FOR THE FIRST HALF OF FISCAL YEAR 1978. THE VICE MINISTER THEN CLARIFIED THE POLICY OF DISPATCHING A BEEF MISSION TO THE US TOWARD THE END OF THE MONTH, AND TO MAKE EFFORTS FOR THE EXPANSION OF DEMAND, THROUGH THE CONDUCTING OF INSPECTIONS ON QUALITY, ETC.

- CONCERNING THE POINT OF 'INCREASING THE IMPORTS OF ORANGES BY THREE TIMES, TO 45,000 TONS" (JOINT STATEMENT), THE VICE MINISTER POINTED OUT THAT HALF OF THIS AMOUNT IS THE FRAMEWORK FOR IMPORTS DURING THE JUNE-AUGUST PERIOD, WHICH IS THE OFF-SEASON FOR OUR COUNTRY'S CITRUS FRUIT, AND THAT IT IS A MATTER OF COURSE THAT THE IMPORTS HAVE NOT YET BEEN CARRIED OUT. IN REGARD TO THE REMAINING HALF OF THE AMOUNT, TOO, THE VICE MINISTER SAID THAT THE US SIDE ALREADY KNOWS FULLY WELL THAT IT IS ALL RIGHT IF THEY ARE IMPORTED DURING FISCAL YEAR 1978. (FULL TRANSLATION)

2. U.S. GOVT SOURCE REFERRED TO IS ASST. SECY. OF STATE JULES KATZ WHO RESPONDED TO QUESTION ON CITRUS AND BEEF
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DURING PRESS BACKGROUND BRIEFING ON A NUMBER OF MATTERS. KATZ FOLLOWED STANDARD U.S. POSITION BUT THIS WAS MANGLED SOME IN JAPANESE PRESS REPORTING. MAF DID CHECK WITH EMBASSY ON WHAT WAS ACTUALLY SAID BUT TOO LATE FOR OKAWARA'S PRESS CONFERENCE. MANSFIELD

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